

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the present application:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A bone fastener assembly, comprising:  
a collar;  
a ring positioned in the collar and coupled to the collar, wherein the ring comprises two or more seats disposed within an opening of the ring; and  
a bone fastener positioned in the opening, said bone fastener comprising a shank, a head, and two or more splines on the head of the bone fastener,  
wherein at least one of the splines is configured to couple to at least one of the seats to inhibit separation of the bone fastener from the collar ~~and at least one of the splines is configured to couple with an inner surface of the ring~~ to inhibit removal of the head from the ring.
2. (Original) The bone fastener assembly of claim 1, wherein the two or more splines are distributed circumferentially about the head of the bone fastener.
3. (Original) The bone fastener assembly of claim 1, wherein the head of the bone fastener comprises three splines.
4. (Original) The bone fastener assembly of claim 1, wherein the collar is configured so that the ring can be inserted into the collar between two arms of the collar, and wherein removal of the ring from the collar is inhibited after the ring is coupled to the collar.
5. (Original) The bone fastener assembly of claim 1, wherein the collar is configured so that the ring can be inserted into the collar through a bottom of the collar, and wherein removal of the ring from the collar is inhibited after the ring is coupled to the collar.

6. (Original) The bone fastener assembly of claim 1, wherein the ring is configured to compress during insertion of the ring in a body of the collar, and wherein the compressed ring is configured to expand in the body of the collar after insertion to inhibit removal of the ring from the collar.

7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently Amended) A bone fastener assembly, comprising:  
a collar;  
a ring coupled to the collar, wherein the ring comprises two or more grooves and two or more seats;  
a bone fastener positioned in the ring, said bone fastener comprising a shank, a head, and two or more splines on the head of the bone fastener, wherein the splines are configured to pass at least partially through the grooves in the ring, and wherein at least one of the splines is configured to couple to at least one of the seats to inhibit separation of the bone fastener from the collar;  
wherein the ring is configured to allow polyaxial movement of the collar relative to the shank; and  
wherein at least one of the splines is configured to couple with an inner surface of the ring to inhibit removal of the head from the ring.

9. (Original) The bone fastener assembly of claim 8, wherein the two or more splines are distributed circumferentially about the head of the bone fastener.

10. (Original) The bone fastener assembly of claim 8, wherein the head of the bone fastener is configured to pass through a bottom of the collar, wherein the two or more splines are configured to pass through the two or more grooves, and wherein the bone fastener is configured to be rotated and positioned in the two or more seats of the ring.

11. (Original) The bone fastener assembly of claim 8, wherein the head of the bone fastener comprises three splines.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Currently Amended) A bone fastener, comprising:

a head and a shank;

two or more splines on the head of the bone fastener, wherein at least one of the splines is configured to couple the bone fastener to a ring in a collar;

wherein the bone fastener is configured to be inserted head first through ~~though~~ an opening in the ring, rotated relative to the ring, and seated in the ring; and

wherein at least one of the splines is configured to couple with an inner surface of the ring to inhibit removal of the head from the ring.

14. (Original) The bone fastener of claim 13, wherein the two or more splines are distributed circumferentially about the head of the bone fastener.

15. (Original) The bone fastener of claim 13, wherein the bone fastener is cannulated.

16. (Original) The bone fastener of claim 13, wherein the head of the bone fastener comprises three splines.

17. (Canceled)

18. (Original) The bone fastener of claim 13, wherein at least one of the splines comprises a projection configured to couple with the ring to inhibit removal of the head from the ring.

19. (Original) The bone fastener of claim 13, wherein at least one of the splines is tapered.

20. (Original) The bone fastener of claim 13, wherein an inner surface of the ring comprises two or more grooves, and wherein the grooves are configured to allow passage of the two or more splines.

21-122. (Canceled)

123. (Previously Presented) The bone fastener assembly of claim 1, wherein at least one spline may comprise a recessed surface that is configured to receive a projection extending from the inner surface of the ring.

124. (Previously Presented) The bone fastener assembly of claim 8, wherein at least one spline may comprise a recessed surface that is configured to receive a projection extending from the inner surface of the ring.

125. (Previously Presented) The bone fastener assembly of claim 13, wherein at least one spline may comprise a recessed surface that is configured to receive a projection extending from the inner surface of the ring.

126. (New) The bone fastener assembly of claim 1, wherein the bone fastener is positioned completely through the opening.